Claims

1.   (Previously Presented) A method of assigning a call to one of a plurality of agents at least some of which are human agents, such method comprising the steps of:

        providing a description of the call to at least some of the human agents of the plurality of agents;

        receiving a bid to handle the call from at least one of the human agents; and

        assigning the call to an agent of the plurality of agents with a highest relative received bid.

2.   (Original) The method of assigning the call as in claim 1 further comprising determining a minimum skill level for the call.

3.   (Original) The method of assigning the call as in claim 2 further comprising rejecting any bid from an agent of the plurality of agents who does not meet the minimum skill level for the call.

4.   (Original) The method of assigning the call as in claim 1 wherein the step of providing the description further comprises displaying the provided information on a terminal display of each agent of the plurality of agents.

5.   (Original) The method of assigning the call as in claim 1 further comprising defining the bid as being a numerical value between two limits.

6.   (Original) The method of assigning the call as in claim 5 wherein the step of defining the bid as being a numerical value between two limits further comprises defining the two limits as being a numerical value between one and ten.

7.   (Original) The method of assigning the call as in claim 1 further comprising classifying the call.

8. (Original) The method of assigning the call as in claim 7 further comprising determining an average number of calls handled per time period of a call type of the classified call for each agent of the plurality of agents.

9. (Original) The method of assigning the call as in claim 8 further comprising calculating a group average of calls handled per time period of the call type of the classified call.

10. (Original) The method of assigning the call as in claim 9 further comprising rejecting any bid from an agent of the plurality of agents where the agent's determined average exceeds a threshold value above the calculated group average.

11. (Original) The method of assigning the call as in claim 1 further comprising assigning the call to a default agent of the plurality of agents when an acceptable bid is not received within a predetermined time period.

12. (Previously Presented) A apparatus for assigning a call to one of a plurality of agents at least some of which are human agents, such apparatus comprising:

 means for providing a description of the call to at least one of the human agents of the plurality of agents;

 means for receiving a bid to handle the call from at least one of the human agents of the plurality of agents; and

 means for assigning the call to an agent of the plurality of agents with a highest relative received bid.

13. (Original) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 12 further comprising means for determining a minimum skill level for the call.

14. (Original) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 13 further comprising means for rejecting any bid from an agent of the plurality of agents who does not meet the minimum skill level for the call.

15.   (Original) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 12 wherein the means for providing the description further comprises means for displaying the provided information on a terminal display of each agent of the plurality of agents.

16.   (Original) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 12 further comprising means for defining the bid as being a numerical value between two limits.

17.   (Original) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 16 wherein the means for defining the bid as being a numerical value between two limits further comprises means for defining the two limits as being a numerical value between one and ten.

18.   (Original) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 12 further comprising means for classifying the call.

19.   (Original) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 18 further comprising means for determining an average number of calls handled per time period of a call type of the classified call for each agent of the plurality of agents.

20.   (Original) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 19 further comprising means for calculating a group average of calls handled per time period of the call type of the classified call.

21.   (Original) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 20 further comprising means for rejecting any bid from an agent of the plurality of agents where the agent's determined average exceeds a threshold value above the calculated group average.

22.   (Currently Amended) A apparatus for assigning a call to one of a plurality of agents, such apparatus comprising:

a call display processor adapted to provide a description of the call to each of the plurality of agents prior to assignment of the call to an agent of the plurality of agents;

an call selection window adapted to display the provided description of the call and to allow available agents of the plurality of agents to bid on the call; and

a call assignment adapted to assign the call to an agent of the plurality of agents with a highest relative received bid.

23.   (Original) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 22 further comprising a minimum skill level for the call.

24.   (Original) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 23 further comprising an agent processor adapted to reject any bid from an agent of the plurality of agents who does not meet the minimum skill level for the call.

25.   (Original) The apparatus for assigning the call as in claim 22 wherein bids on the calls further comprise a numerical value between two limits.

26.   (Currently Amended) A method of assigning a call to one of a plurality of agents, such method comprising the steps of:
    providing a description of the call;
    displaying the provided description to the plurality of agents;
    receiving a bid to handle the call from each of the plurality of agents prior to assignment of the call to an agent of the plurality of agents; and
    assigning the call to an agent of the plurality of agents with a highest relative value of the received bids.

27.   (Original) A method of assigning a call to one of a plurality of agents, such method comprising the steps of:
    providing a description of the call;
    displaying the provided description to the plurality of agents;
    receiving a bid to handle the call from each of the plurality of agents;
    comparing a value of each of the received bids; and
    assigning the call to an agent of the plurality of agents with a highest relative value of the compared bids.